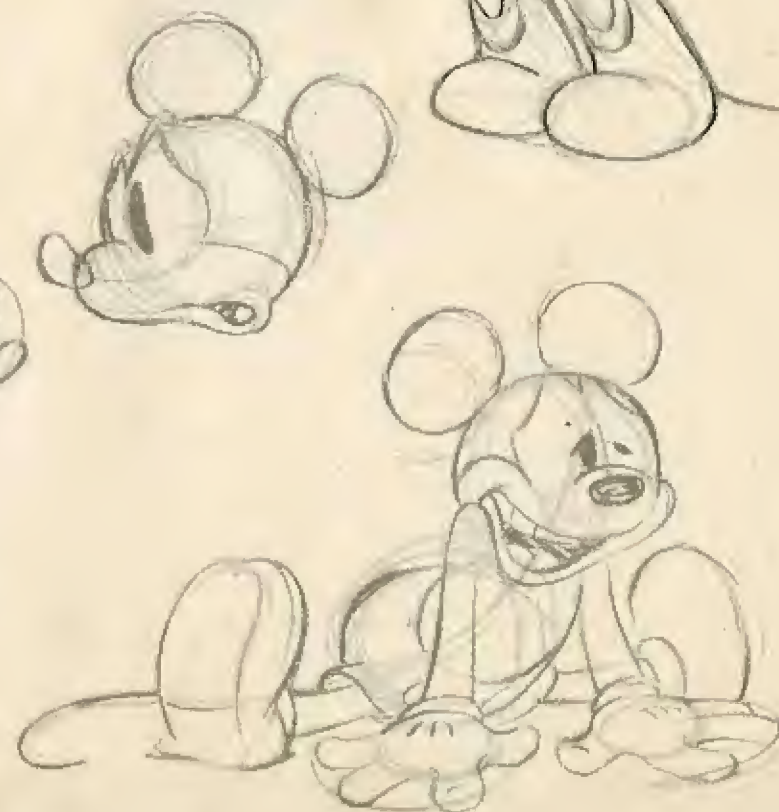
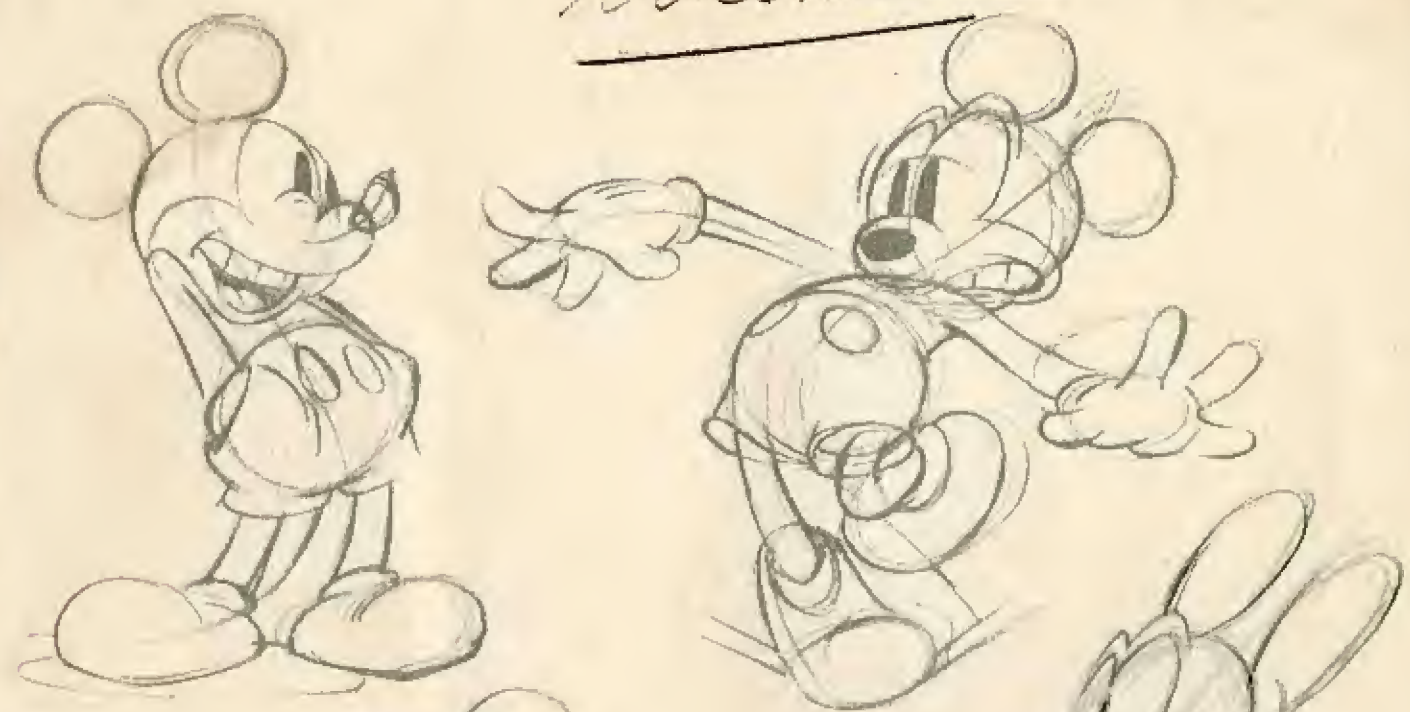
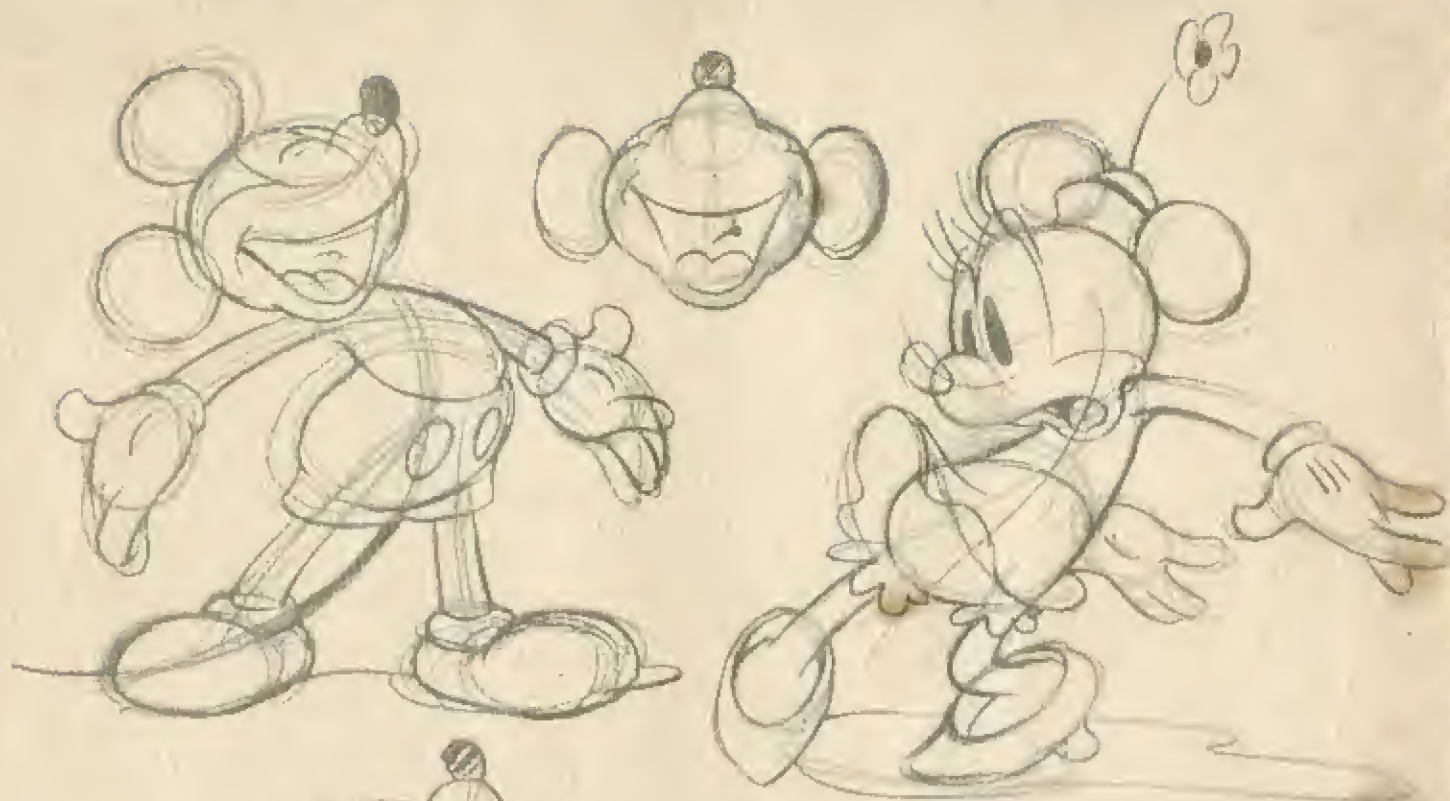


*Weeks*

# THE WALT DISNEY STUDIOS







**THIS BOOK** is a brief outline of the Studio's principal departments and an explanation to artists of its employment policies. All the illustrations herein are reproduced from drawings made for actual production purposes.

AN INTRODUCTION TO  
**THE WALT DISNEY STUDIOS**





THE FIRST DUTY OF THE  
ANIMATOR IS TO CARI-  
CATURE LIFE AND ACTION  
FOR THE AUDIENCE.

## THE STUDIO

The Walt Disney Studio in Hollywood, California, is an organization of over six hundred persons, comprised principally of artists engaged in the production of animated motion pictures in Technicolor, with sound. The Studio, since its establishment in 1924, has been engaged in the production of short entertainment reels (Mickey Mouse and Silly Symphonies). These shorts, by virtue of their consistent quality and amusement value, have acquired a world-wide audience of many millions of persons.

As the Studio has grown it has brought about many changes in the form of the animated cartoon. The utilization of a real plot or story, the introduction of sound, the use of color, and the development of character and per-

sonality-building are but a few of the many improvements achieved by the Studio during the past few years.

**THE RELEASE** of "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs," the first full-length animated feature picture ever made, marks the beginning of a new era in animation. Stories, dramatic effects, and actions formerly impossible of execution, can now be realized in Disney feature productions as well as in the short subjects. In the future the Studio will continue to make many short subjects and at least one feature-length picture each year.

**TELEVISION**, although in its infancy, opens up a vast field of entertainment. Tests already made prove that of all subjects capable of projection none can equal in clarity of transmission, the Disney Cartoons.

The finer quality and increasing scope of the pictures now make it possible to offer employment to a more varied and greater number of artists than in the past. Fine Artists, Illustrators, Commercial Layout Artists, Caricaturists, and Cartoonists may now find a greater opportunity for their talents in animation than ever before.

**THE DIVISIONS** of the Disney Studio that offer congenial employment to the artist are: the Story, the Layout, the Background, and the Animation Departments. To qualify for employment every applicant must be able to draw well. He should understand the mechanics of free-hand drawing and composition. Knowledge of the figure is a decided asset. Each department's requirements vary, and each appeals to a different type of artist.



THE ANIMATOR BRINGS TO LIFE THE INHERENT POSSIBILITIES OF A GOOD STORY OR A FUNNY GAG.

## STORY

Artists in the Story Department originate and develop the ideas which form the basis of Disney pictures. They work out plots, situations, and gags. They are responsible for the continuity and the theme of each picture.

**STORY MEN** must be able to draw. The stories are not written but are visualized in sketch form. Small drawings in colored pencil are made portraying various situations in the picture. These are tacked up in sequence on large boards where they are studied in relation to the story as a whole. This rough pictorial draft is then presented to Walt Disney, the directors, and the animators. In this

way the stories are built, continuity strengthened, and dramatic effects visualized in graphic form.

The Story Department is usually interesting to an artist who has a good artistic background, an understanding of story construction, and some familiarity with the stage and its problems. He must be able to see humor in

situations and possibilities for gags in the people and things around him. Because of the importance of the story to the finished picture this department often appeals to success-



ful artists in other branches of the Studio. Animation knowledge is of particular value to a story man.

**THE CARICATURISTS** in the Story Department are responsible for the development of new screen characters or personalities such as the Three Little Pigs, the Water Babies, and the Tortoise and the Hare. It is the caricaturist who creates these interesting figures by imagining a bird or animal taking on human characteristics.

Briefly, the story man strives to anticipate the psychological trends of audiences and their reactions to gags, situations, and stories. He must understand the value of staging and dramatic effects, and be able to express his ideas in convincing compositional form.





TO SYNCHRONIZE AN ACTION  
TO ITS BACKGROUND THE  
ANIMATOR MUST COMPOSE  
AN EVERCHANGING PICTURE.

## LAYOUT

A further development of the story idea is carried out by the layout artists and the story layout artists. These men must retain the basic ideas and feeling of the story and yet incorporate in their

drawings all the potentialities of the finished picture.

The story layout artist is responsible for the pictorial theme and mood of each picture. He plans effect shots, atmospheric effects, interesting camera angles. He explores the possibilities of locales as are found in such pictures as "Water Babies," "Musicland," and "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs." Primarily he is a visualizer.

The layout artist plans the exact size of each scene, general color schemes, and all working details of the backgrounds and characters. He is responsible for the plan of action that the animator follows in relation to the background and the music. Hence, he must understand action and be able to give the animator characters that work and scenes in which action is possible.

To qualify as a layout man, an artist must have a diversified background. He should know the mechanics of

drawing, color, and composition, and also have some knowledge of set designing, staging, and light effects. Because he must draw Disney characters, a knowledge of the human figure is necessary. Since such a background, as a rule, is attained only through several years of practical experience in commercial art fields, the Layout Department usually interests illustrators, commercial layout artists, newspaper artists, and children's book illustrators.

## BACKGROUND

The background artists are responsible for all scenic effects as they are seen on the theatre screen. They render almost exclusively in water color.

The Background Department is a research laboratory for the study and use of color. Here the preliminary work of the layout artist reaches completion. All detail, props, and atmospheric effects are now executed in transparent water color and the picture as a whole is tied together through color continuity and composition.

Of necessity all background artists must be thoroughly acquainted with the mechanics of color, be able to render in water color washes, and draw freely with a pencil. Since any error in the original painting is multiplied enormously when projected upon the screen, the back-





ground artist must be sure of his methods. The mood and tone of the complete picture must be sustained in each individual scene, and this unity can only be preserved by men possessing a fine color sense.

**THE BACKGROUND** Department is closely related to the fine arts. Landscape, still-life, and pictorial composition play an intimate part in the work of a background artist. Previous training in architectural rendering, if not confined entirely to drafting instruments, is valuable, but not a prerequisite. Illustrators and children's book illustrators usually adapt their talents quickly to the requirements of the Background Department.

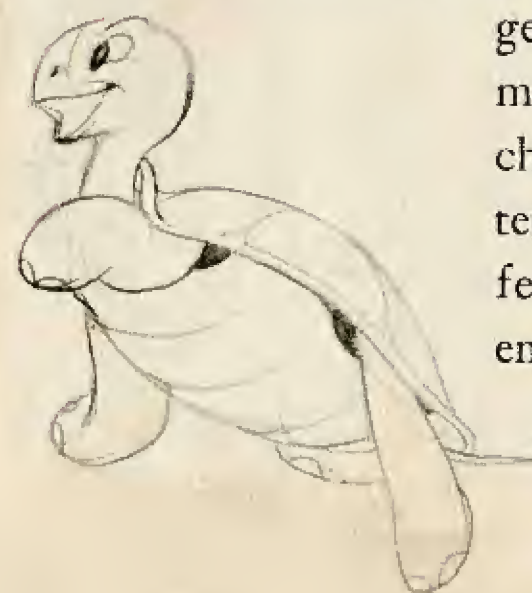
UPON THE ANIMATOR'S ABILITY TO DRAMATIZE PERSONALITY AND ACTION DEPENDS THE SUCCESS OF THE STORY.

## ANIMATION

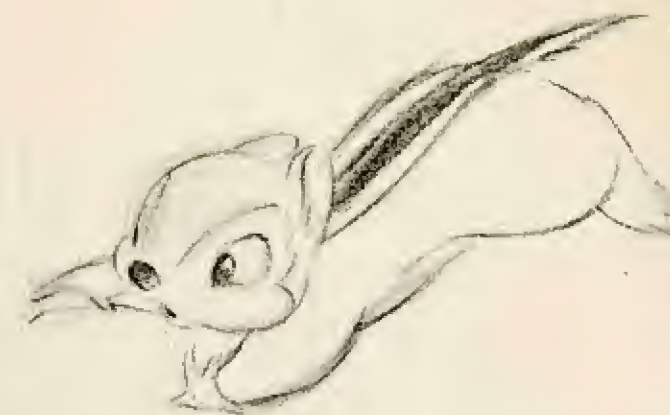
Broadly speaking, animation implies the complete manufacture of animated cartoons. More often, the word animation is used to designate the manipulation of a series of drawings in such a way that a sensation of movement is created. To convey this sensation to an audience, each drawing in this series is photographed in sequence on standard motion picture film and projected on a screen.

A simple illustration of this principle can be demonstrated by making a "flip" book. On the outside margin of successive pages of an old magazine draw a small dot or circle, making each circle a little off center from the one on the preceding page. When twenty or thirty circles have been drawn, flip the edges. The resulting illusion of movement is animation in its crudest form.

**TODAY,** animation is concerned with the interpretation of the action of animate and inanimate forms. It caricatures



gestures and expressions of human and animal life. It portrays character and personality. It intensifies sensations and moods, feelings and emotions experienced by people everywhere.





**THE ANIMATOR** is responsible for the execution of all drawings that create the sensation of movement. He dramatizes the action and intensifies the mood or feeling of the story. He is responsible for the successful presentation of all gags, and the continuity of action within each scene. He coordinates the action, gestures, and facial expressions of the characters to the music and dialogue.

The animator rehearses in person, with the director, the scenes which he is about to animate. He completely familiarizes himself with the story and the dramatic possi-

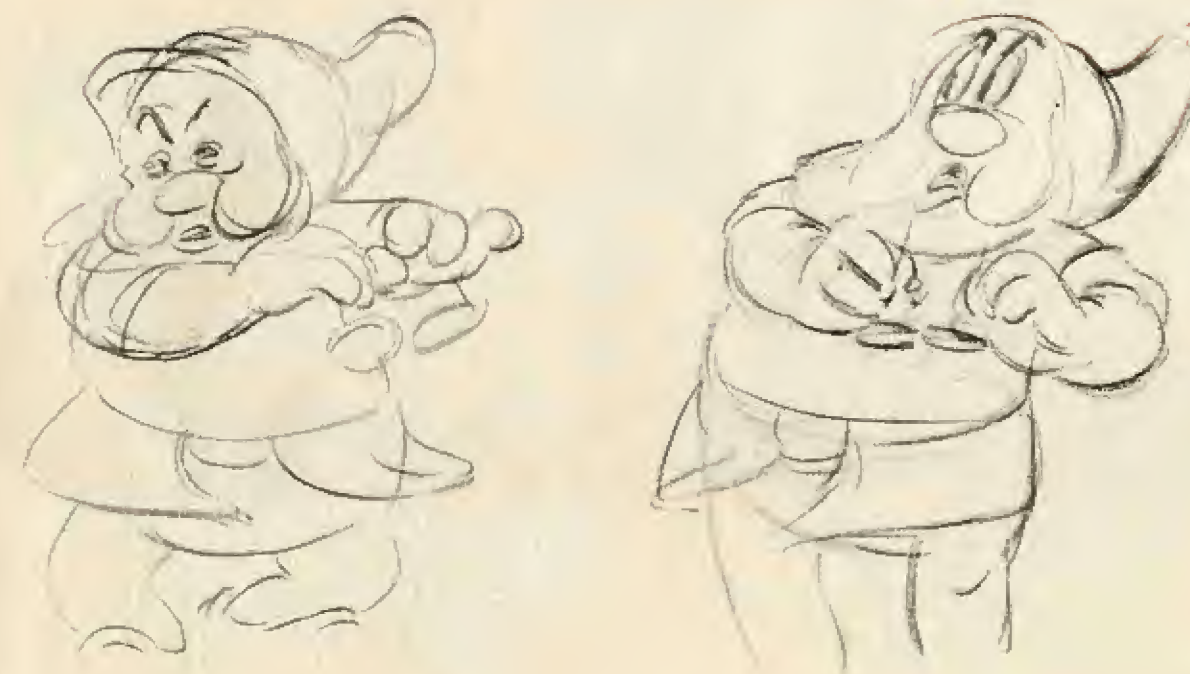
STUDY OF THE FOUR PHASES OF THE ACTION DEPICTED WILL REVEAL HOW AN ANIMATOR WORKS IN THE ROUGH, VISUALIZES ACTION, DEVELOPS PERSONALITY. bilities inherent in every phase of its development. He then visualizes the action of his characters in a series of rough key drawings, indicating only those phases of the action indispensable to the telling of his story. His main concern at this stage is the feeling



to be sustained, the plan of action, and the timing of the various movements. His assistants supply the necessary number of rough drawings to complete the action. These drawings are photographed and a reel of these "roughs" is studied by the animator and the director. This constitutes a visual rehearsal and makes possible early changes.

The animator then takes these "roughs" and strengthens and refines the key drawings, supplying any important details which may have been omitted. His assistants, with the help of this material, now develop each character.

**THE VALUE** of an animator is dependent upon his ability to dramatize and caricature life, and to time and stage his characters' actions in an unusual and interesting way. An animator must be a showman—he must know how to entertain an audience, to present a gag, to picture dramatically an ordinary incident. Above all, he must be a sure and skillful draftsman.



*To have*



**THE ASSISTANT ANIMATOR** develops the "roughs," takes care of all routine work, and at times assists in the animation of minor actions in a scene. He also is responsible for all finished drawings.

After the animator has developed the key drawings, the assistant animator supplies such additional drawings to the action as are necessary to make the entire action comprehensible to his own assistants, the "inbetween" men. For example, if the animator makes two drawings in a series of ten, the assistant may supply two or three more, and the remaining drawings are done by the inbetweeners. Any such series implies a complete analysis and dramatization of the action by every artist contributing. **MOST** animator's drawings are very rough. Therefore, it is necessary for the assistant animator to have a thorough knowledge of all the characters, both as to construction and personality. The assistant must be able to capture the



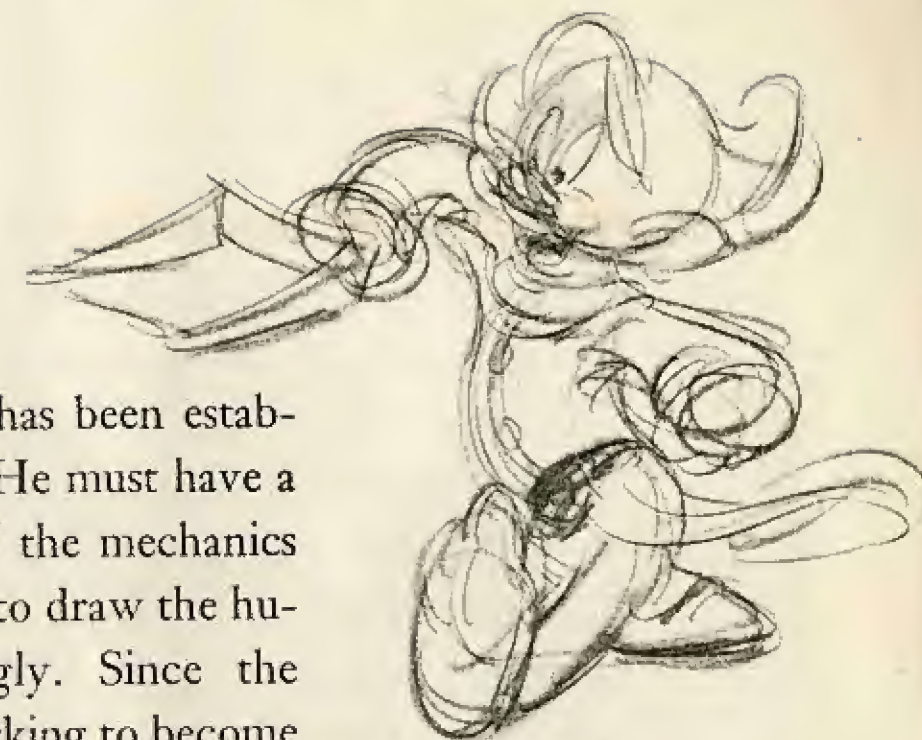
mood and feeling that has been established by his animator. He must have a sound understanding of the mechanics of drawing and be able to draw the human figure convincingly. Since the assistant animator is working to become an animator he should possess potentially all the requirements of the animator.

**THE INBETWEENER** supplies all drawings, both "rough" and "cleaned up," that are not handled by the assistant animator. Although concerned less with the conception of the action than the assistant animator, he still is responsible for over half the drawings in any action. He performs the most simple operations in the entire process of animation.

The inbetweeners must have all the potential abilities of an animator. His work is considered merely as training for animation in the future. Only by serving as inbetweeners and then assistant is it possible for an artist to prepare himself for animation. The inbetweeners must draw well, understand action and caricature, and adapt

THE ASSISTANT'S "CLEAN-UP"  
OF THIS "ROUGH" INDICATES  
DRAWING, AND ACTION AND  
CHARACTER ANALYSIS.

himself easily to new work and new methods. Above all, he must want to be an animator.





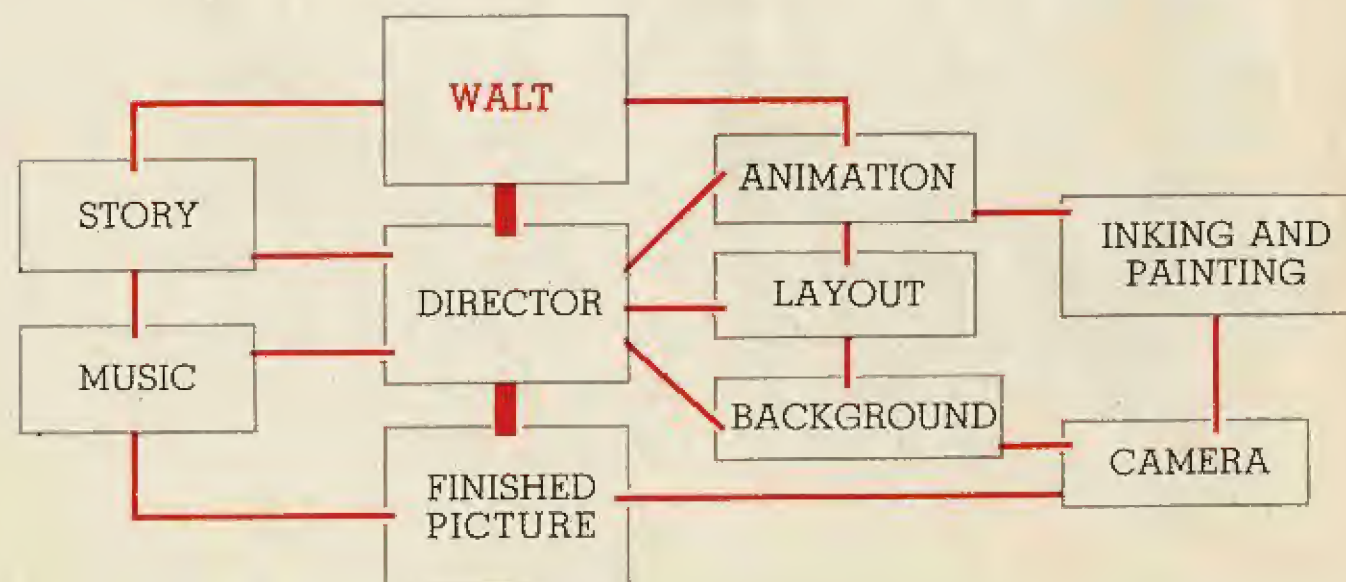
## DIRECTORS

THE ANIMATOR BRINGS TO LIFE THE DIRECTOR'S VISUAL CONCEPTION OF TIMING, ACTING, AND CONTINUITY.

To coordinate all of the intricate steps and processes necessary in making a picture, one guiding mind is essential. In the Disney Studio this mind is Walt Disney. He personally supervises the origin, development, and completion of all pictures made in the Studio.

Working on each picture is a director who is responsible to Walt Disney for the production in its entirety. He coordinates the music to the action, the action to the story, the color to the whole. The director regulates the movement of his picture through the Studio.

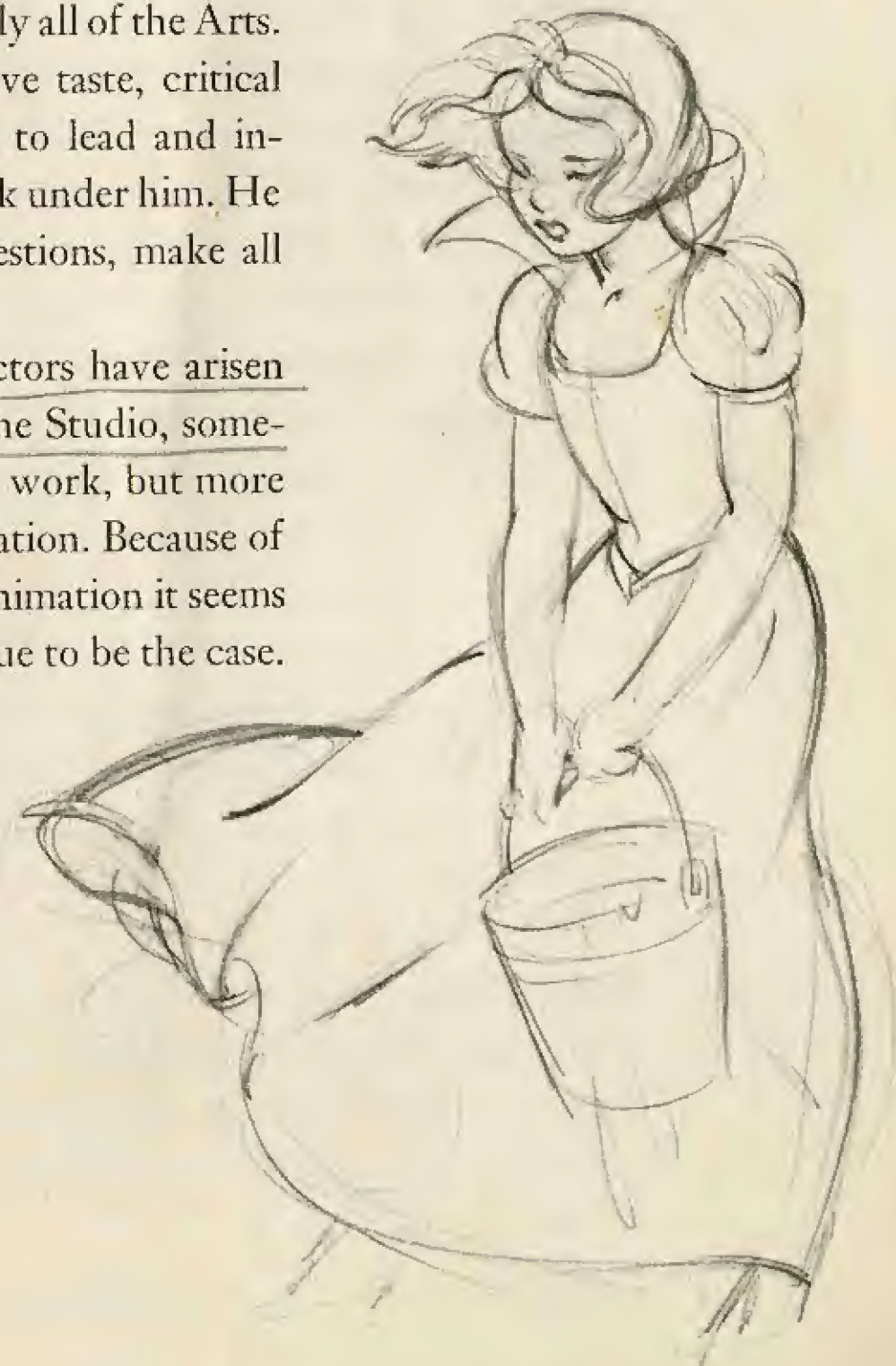
The director rehearses the action of the entire picture with his animators; guides them in their interpretation of each individual scene in relation to the picture; designates



the music, dialogue, and sound effects to be used; supervises cutting and staging. He builds personality, gags, and continuity. He answers all questions and makes all decisions in connection with his picture.

**THE DIRECTOR** must have complete knowledge of every phase of animation, have executive ability, and outstanding dramatic talent. He must be familiar with practically all of the Arts. Finally, he must have taste, critical ability, and be able to lead and inspire those who work under him. He must answer all questions, make all decisions.

To date, all directors have arisen from the ranks of the Studio, sometimes through story work, but more often through animation. Because of the complexity of animation it seems that this will continue to be the case.







**WE HAVE** briefly shown how a story is organized, how it is developed by the layout artist, the director, and the animator, and how a background artist functions in relation to the picture. Note that with the exception of the backgrounds and layouts all drawings, so far, have been executed in pencil. The artists in the Story and Animation Departments work only with pencil. However, these pencil drawings are not used in the finished picture.

To facilitate working conditions and to make the application of color feasible, the pencil drawings are carefully traced on celluloid in ink. Each tracing is then painted, usually in opaque water color. The painted celluloids placed over the transparent water color backgrounds are finally photographed in Technicolor.

All inking and painting of celluloids, and all tracing done in the Studio, is performed exclusively by a large staff of girls known as Inkers and Painters. This work, exacting in character, calls for great skill in the handling of pen and brush. This is the only department in the Disney Studio open to women artists.

**SINCE** music, dialogue, and sound effects have previously been synchronized to the animator's drawings, the picture can now be projected in the theatre as a complete animated cartoon with sound and color.

## TRAINING

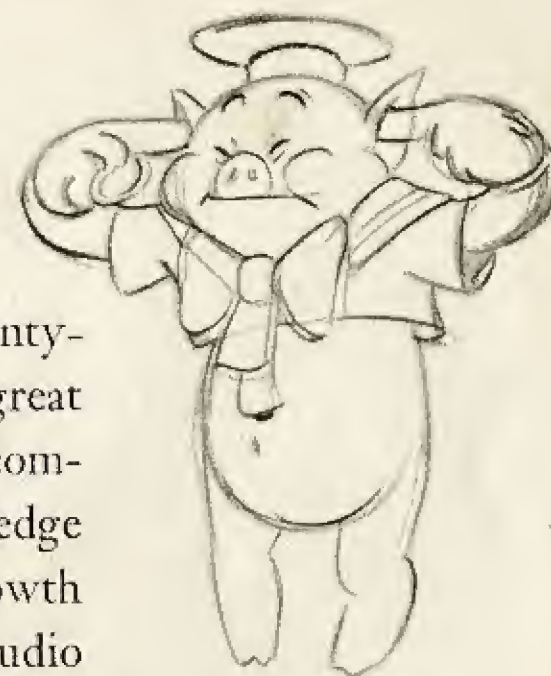
In 1930 the Studio consisted of only twenty-four artists. Its subsequent growth, to a great extent, is due to Walt Disney's policy of complete dissemination of animation knowledge throughout the Studio. To stimulate growth it is imperative that every man in the Studio have access to all information about production. It can honestly be said that one man's knowledge is every man's knowledge in the Disney Studio.

This constitutes a challenge to every man, from the most experienced director to the newest inbetweeners.

The only barriers to an artist's progress in the Studio are his own personal shortcomings: lack of ability, and lack of initiative.

A series of lectures is delivered to the artists in the Studio in which every conceivable phase of animation is discussed. The director speaks on the problems faced in making a picture, and the relationship

of the artists in the various departments to the director. The animator gives the assistant animators talks which are based upon his years of experience. Technical discussions are conducted by experts on the construction of various characters and on special problems confronting







the men. Old and new pictures are shown so that every man will be familiar with what has been done and what is being done.

Each man is supervised by a staff of highly trained technical experts who constantly strengthen his work and watch his development. As soon as his work justifies the effort, he is placed under the personal supervision of a top animator and is then in a position to learn the principles of animation at their source.

Each man is expected to make test reels of animation. If these have merit, they are reviewed by the animators,

the directors, and Walt Disney. Hence, every man in the Animation Department can win recognition as soon as he is able to produce noteworthy animation.

Every artist in the Studio is encouraged to submit original story ideas, and to contribute gags and sketches on each story before it goes into production. If these ideas are usable, he is paid for his efforts. This is another means by which a new man can make himself valuable to the Studio.

A complete Training Department has been created exclusively for artists employed in the Studio. This enables each man to strengthen his draftsmanship and to continue research in drawing by working directly from nature. Classes in life drawing, composition, and perspective are held five evenings a week. Weekly classes in action analysis are conducted, in which moving pictures of natural action and cartoon action are studied in detail. Special classes in animation are held regularly.

Note: Walt Disney has never conducted a school for artists except for those in his employ. Artists should receive preliminary training at accredited art schools. It has been the experience of the Studio that such training, to be effective, usually requires three or four years.







## SALARIES

The Studio is governed in its policy of salaries by two factors: the potentialities of the artist, and his adaptability to production requirements. Inasmuch as previous experience in animation is practically unheard of, each man's ability remains an unknown factor until it has been proved in actual production within the Studio. This fact and the special requirements of animation make the problem of fairly evaluating a man's talents perplexing.

The Studio already has men qualified to produce the type of pictures being made today. The vital question asked of each new man is whether he will be able to grow with the Studio, and in time lead that growth. The artist is also judged upon his ability to adapt himself within a reasonable length of time to production requirements, because, unless he can express his talents in animation terms he is of no value to the Studio.

There is no seniority system at the Disney Studio by which salaries are fixed. The artist at all times receives a salary based on his ability to produce. The Disney Studio, however, reserves the right to be sole judge with reference to these matters.

A well-trained artist usually can prove his value in the

Story, Layout and Background Departments shortly after he is employed. Hence, a fair estimate of his earning capacity can soon be made and he can be offered a salary closely in line with his worth to the organization. The range of starting salaries is so wide that only upon examination of each individual's work, references, and background is a fair appraisal possible.

To estimate the potentialities and adaptability of an artist entering the Animation Department, however, requires more than an examination of samples of his work. Every artist, no matter what his background, must serve an apprenticeship in the Studio in order to become an animator. This takes time and involves expense on the part of the Studio. Therefore, starting salaries are low in this department.

**AFTER** qualifying for employment in the Animation Department, an artist is given a starting salary ranging from eighteen to thirty dollars a week. At first, he is given the simplest drawings to execute, then more difficult ones as he adapts himself to production requirements. Every effort is made to help each man advance. His progress, however, is entirely dependent upon his own ability.



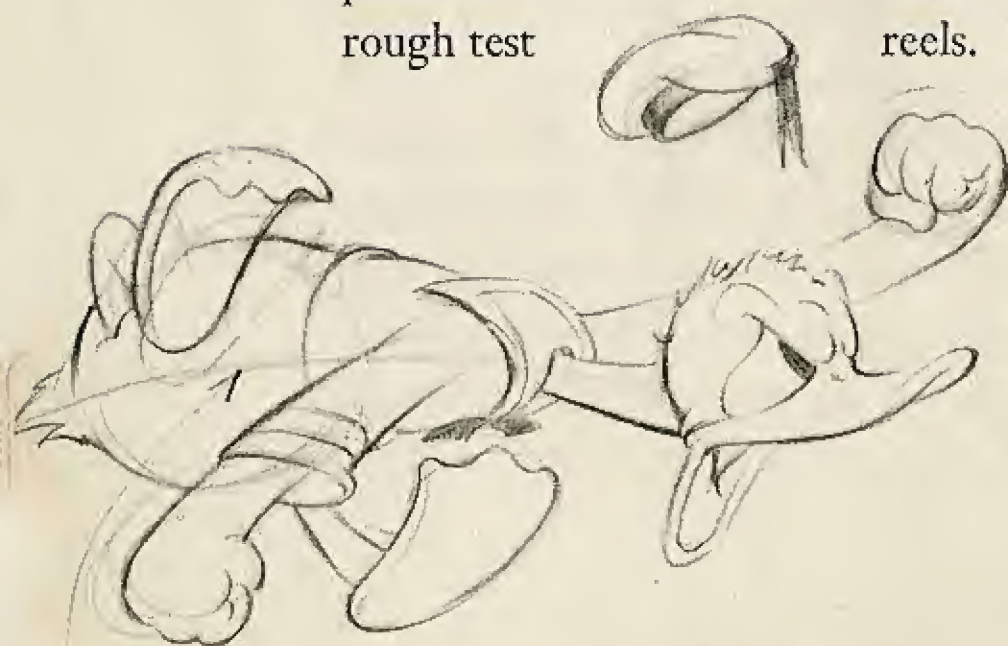


## TRYOUT

TO COORDINATE DRAMA,  
MUSIC, ACTION, AND GRAPHICS  
THE ANIMATOR MUST WORK  
WITH ALL THE ARTS.

Prior to employment in the Animation Department, each applicant must satisfy the Studio on three counts: he must present representative samples of the work he has been doing; he must execute a number of drawing problems (see Pages 28-31); he must prove his ability to adapt himself to production requirements. If his samples and his problem solutions are satisfactory to the Studio, the applicant is required to participate in an experimental period of work at the Studio called the "tryout."

**THIS TRYOUT** consists of four weeks of training involving an intensive study of the basic principles of animation, action analysis, and drawing. Each man animates simple actions; then his drawings are photographed and projected on the screen. He also sees and analyzes many animated pictures—  
rough test both complete pictures and  
reels. Natural action reels,



run at slow and regular speed, are studied. No work done during this training period is ever used in actual production.

The tryout is designed: first, to determine how well the artist can adapt himself to the basic principles of animation before being intrusted with production work, and second, to allow the applicant to satisfy himself that animation should be his life work. Since not every applicant can adapt himself to Studio requirements, Walt Disney reserves the right to terminate a tryout for any man at any time. Each man represents a considerable investment and every consideration is shown an artist once he has qualified for the tryout.

**BE SURE** one point is clear—this four-week experimental period, although designed primarily to help the artist in the new medium of animation, is in no sense a school. There is no fee of any kind. He receives no salary during this period, but the Studio does give each applicant, while in the tryout, a small allowance to help defray living expenses.

If the artist is unable to meet the Disney requirements, naturally, he is not offered employment. But each artist who successfully completes the tryout is given a position at once. Having proved his ability to work, every opportunity for progress that the Studio can offer is now at the artist's disposal.





THE ANIMATOR, THROUGH EXPERIMENTATION, HAS OPENED A NEW FIELD OF EXPRESSION FOR THE ARTIST.



## PROCEDURE

Walt Disney assumes that every artist who enters the Studio plans to make animation his life work. He is eager and willing to train each man as quickly and thoroughly as possible, for he realizes that the future of animation depends on the creative ability of his artists. This training is not for sale and cannot be bought at any price anywhere.

If you are measuring the prospects of your success in animation by the size of a starting salary, forget about the Disney Studio. Walt Disney is looking for artists who have vision for the future of animation. He wants men who have the potentialities to qualify eventually for the large salaries which he is already paying many of his men.

**NOTE:** Only artists interested in the Animation Department need participate in the tryout. The relatively small Story, Layout and Background Departments offer employment to only a limited number of artists in contrast to a possible hundred positions per year offered by the Animation Department. Advancement is more rapid in the Animation Department, and top animators command the highest salaries in the Studio.

As we have pointed out in this survey of the Studio, an animator must possess a rare combination of talents. To judge a man entirely upon samples of work already done is neither fair to the artist nor to the Studio. Hence, all artists seeking employment in the Animation Department, in addition to samples, are required to execute the problems on the following pages. Solutions to the problems need not accompany applications made to other departments, although at times they are requested. These problems, filed for employment reference only, become the property of the Walt Disney Studio.

**THE ENCLOSED** application blank, properly filled out and signed, the problems, and a representative cross-section of your work should be sent in a single package to the Disney Studio Annex, 2710 Hyperion Ave., Hollywood, California. Do not include charcoal drawings, oil paintings, lettering, or highly specialized work. Kindly include sufficient postage to cover the return of your samples, insured.

Applications for the Background Department must be accompanied by pencil drawings and samples rendered in transparent water color. Layout applicants should include in their samples "roughs," landscape sketches, and character studies executed in pencil. Story applicants should include, in addition to drawings, a detailed account of literary and dramatic endeavors.





## PROBLEMS

The following problems in free-hand drawing are to be executed without the use of models, scrap, or photographs. Each drawing should be on a separate sheet of standard size typewriting paper (8 1/2" by 11"). Do not mat or staple drawings. The drawings should be made entirely in line with one grade of pencil, either "B" or "2B." Pencil drawings throughout the text and on the inside covers of this book show the type of line desired.

The line used should not be a hard wire line, nor, on the other hand, a highly shaded line, but simply a direct means of expressing the forms to be rendered. Emphasize weight, balance, and movement to give a feeling of solidity of form. Pay particular attention to the drawing of the hands and feet. Use no tone or cross-hatching.

Each problem involves the expression of an action and mood. The choice of subject matter, the scale of the drawing, the composition, and the directness of expression will be indicative of your ability and taste. The drawings should not be rushed in execution or conception. After all, you are showing us, through these drawings, everything you know about free-hand drawing, caricature, action, dramatic presentation, and interpretation of mood. Remember always, that an animator entertains audiences. Hence, his drawings must be interesting and exciting.

Please send your original free-hand drawings — not tracings, which usually are stiff.

The choice of subject matter in this group of problems is entirely up to you. We are interested in how you caricature human actions and moods rather than your ability to make typical cartoon drawings. The funny and the dramatic side of life should be expressed in these drawings. Each problem is merely a skeleton framework into which you may read what you like.

1. A tall, thin man is rowing a small rowboat. How can this scene be made funny? Is it a hot day? Is it raining? What about the reaction of the boat to the water? Is the man really pulling on the oars? Have you staged the action dramatically? Is the scene interesting?
2. A fat man is swinging a pick in a shallow ditch. Is he happy? Are you drawing silhouettes, areas, meaningless lines, or are you drawing masses? How will the man's fat affect his action? Does he feel heavy? Is the pick heavy? Is there an idea clearly expressed?
3. A man is climbing over a barbed-wire fence. Why not use the same figure as in Problem 1? How will his arms, head, hips, legs react to his movement on the fence? Can you make his predicament seem funny? Have you really portrayed the man's character?
4. A man and woman are skating on a rink (roller or ice). There are millions of funny people, funny combinations, funny situations! Have you depicted the funniest? Does your drawing express movement? How about their costumes? Remember, you are caricaturing action.



**THE PROBLEMS** on Page 31 are built around Disney characters. These characters move and think just as people do. To get the most from your expression of their actions and moods, use the same fundamental principles of drawing as in depicting a person under similar circumstances. Broadly speaking, these characters each have arms, legs, torso and head. Their physical make-up is reduced to definite relative proportions. They turn, twist, lift, and pull exactly as do human beings. You must, of course, exaggerate their poses in order to achieve the utmost in expression and a forceful caricature of mood and action.

In the following problems, visualize each action as a whole. Then draw a series of poses that convincingly express your analysis of the entire action. Give the impression that the character is in action, that the position you are expressing is the result of a previous action, and that it will result in a following pose or action. Do not attempt to animate the action. Use a single sheet of paper for each drawing.

Before you attempt to render the following problems, refer to the drawings in this book for the construction of Mickey and the Goof. Break down the characters and analyze their relative proportions. Experiment with them by drawing details of various positions of their heads and bodies. Find out all you can about their construction by taking them apart and putting them together again. Try to express their personalities in each drawing.

